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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2-17 and 23-28 and are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicants AMEND claims 2, 3, 5-10, and 17 and CANCEL claim 1 and ADD claims 23-28.

Applicants greatly appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 9, 15, and 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have amended claim 9 to be in independent form and to recite all of the features of claim 1 and have amended the remaining claims to depend upon claim 9.

Claims 1 and 3-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anderson et al. (US 5,969,461) in view of Katsunori et al. (JP 2000-196407). Claims 2, 6-8 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anderson in view of Katsunori et al. Claims 10-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anderson in view of Katsunori et al., and further in view of Tsuji et al. (US 5,699,027). Applicants have canceled claim 1. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of claims 2-8, 10-14, and 17.

As noted above, Applicants have amended claim 9 to be in independent form and to recite all of the features of claim 1 and have amended the remaining claims to depend upon claim 9. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the prior art rejections of claims 2-8, 10-14, and 17.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that none of the prior art of record, applied alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the unique combination and arrangement of elements recited in claim 9 of the present application. Claims 2-8, 10-17, and newly added 23-28 depend upon claim 9 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that claim 9 is allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt

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allowance are solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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